Job Satisfaction of Women Officers in the Indian Army: A Gender Perspective

SHORT SYNOPSIS

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Certificate

I hereby declare that the short synopsis "Job Satisfaction of Women Officers in the Indian Army: A Gender Perspective" is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Management under School of Leadership and Management of Manav Rachna International Institute of Research & Studies, Faridabad during the academic year 2023-2024.

It is a bona fide record of original work carried out under the supervision of Dr. Surbhi Kapur and has not been submitted in full or part to any other university or institute for degree or diploma. Further, it is certified that short synopsis is plagiarism free and proof has been submitted.

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ABSTRACT

Women have demonstrated their capability to assume leadership roles, including in male-dominated organisations. In the Indian Army, a traditionally male preserve, Women Officers feel disadvantaged and have often sought legal recourse. The Army has gradually accepted them; however, there continue to be reservations regarding their elevation to higher leadership assignments. Women Officers, today, are being considered for permanent commission and promotion to selection grade rank of Colonel, some of them have also assumed command assignments involving troops in the remote border areas. In the future, they may also be integrated with combat arms, and possibly be involved in important activities including conflict situations. Hence, it becomes important, from an organisation perspective, to critically analyse aspects of Job Satisfaction, as they impact women officers.

Job Satisfaction comprises of many factors, dependant largely on the employees' perception and expectations of the job. It is also related to the emotional connection with the job, which is the result of the individuals' comparison of how closely the end results match with those that are desired, like leadership roles and progression, a natural human expectation, which is seen as a vital factor in Job Satisfaction. There is a cultural perception that prevails in respect to Leadership. Many organisations believe that men make better leaders in comparison to their women counterparts. Notwithstanding the significant advances in promoting workplace equality; the army continues to remain a male-dominated environment and so is the case with its leadership. The Army along with the Family, have also been seen as "greedy institutions", hence, Army which is not just a career but a way of life, poses challenges of a very peculiar and distinct nature for Women.

The present research is, therefore, aimed at studying the factors impacting Job Satisfaction among Women Officers. Thereafter, it will empirically measure Job Satisfaction levels among Women Officers. As a next step the endeavour is to compare if Job Satisfaction in the Indian Army is impacted by gender inequality.

Key Words :- *Job Satisfaction, Women Officers, Leadership, Gender, Male Dominated Organisations*

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Job Satisfaction of Women Officers in the Indian Army: A Gender Perspective

1. Introduction

Women and the Armed Forces

Women have gradually made their mark and established their credentials in the workplace, in addition to their socio-cultural roles; women have demonstrated their capability and are rightfully staking their leadership claims in various professions. As a result, many, if not all, male-dominated organisations too have mainly become gender neutral. Military service has traditionally been an exclusively male preserve (Osborne, Gage & Rolbiecki, 2012). Here, too, from an Indian perspective, we are witnessing women seek higher leadership roles.

Till the beginning of the 20th century, the involvement of women in war was limited to providing support in nursing services. However, during the First World War, women's participation underwent a change, aberrations apart; in addition to the medical branch, they were employed in support services like communication & logistics. As the Second World War ended, many countries explored the possibility of employing women for specific duties within the Armed Forces, which did not depend on physical attributes and muscular strength. An exclusive cadre of the 'Women Corps' was made operational in certain armies. However, once the war culminated, even though most women were returned to civilian life, laws were formalized to permit women to join the armed forces.

The Public Law 625: Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948 in USA provided legal authority to women to seek a permanent regular role in the armed forces. The law, however, restricted the number of women on active duty to two percent; it also defined different standards for enlistment for men and women.

The Israeli Defence Forces, in May 1948, founded the Women Corps and in 1949, made conscription mandatory for single and married women without children. At this time, USA, was a country with no major territorial disputes and a largely stable border, whereas Israel was a nation surrounded with enemies and major border disputes. Hence, two nations at what may be seen as the two ends of the security spectrum had open doors for women in the military forces.

In 1949, the British Armed Forces accorded official recognition to women as permanent members, though combat roles were restricted only to men, later in 1950, ranks for women were equated with those for men.

Women Officers and the Indian Experience

The government of India, via Order dated 31 October, opened from 01 Nov 1958 regular commission for women officers (WOs) in the Army Medical Corps (AMC) of the Indian Army (IA). Thereafter, a government notification in January 1992 commenced short service commission for women officers in branches other than the medical. This was opened for the three services namely, Army, Navy and Air Force. In the Army, Women officers were inducted into the Army Postal Service (APS), Army Education Corps (AEC), Army Ordinance Corps (AOC), Army Service Corps (ASC), Corps of Signals, Corps of Engineers, Corps of Electrical & Mechanical Engineers (EME) and the Judge Advocates General (JAG), although only as Short Service Officers. In 2010, following a Supreme Court order, women officers commissioned in the AEC and JAG branches were granted Permanent Commission (PC).

An Hon'ble Supreme Court order, on 17 Feb 2020, directed that all serving WOs be considered for PC on terms equal to those for their male counterparts. The restriction of employing them in 'staff only' appointments was also done away with. Now, since the year 2022, not only are women officers being considered for permanent commission but also given assignments involving command of soldiers.

Discontent Among the Women Army Officers Acceptance of women in the IA, has witnessed a lot of legal intervention. Similar has been the case for most countries, exceptions apart. Despite being a part of the IA for over three decades, the WOs continue to take legal recourse, and they feel primarily disadvantaged. On the other side, the IA has gradually accepted them; some note that operational need has not necessarily been the principal factor for their joining the Armed Forces, (Suman M, 2011). Accordingly, there continues to be reservations regarding their elevation to higher leadership assignments. Verma, A., & Mulani, M., (2018), have alluded to gender bias, harassment, and lack of family support as significant challenges working women in India face. Similar have been the observations of Bhandari P, (2020), in her research findings on “The Challenges faced by Indian Working Women in Various Sector”.

In the light of these developments, it becomes pertinent to analyse the levels of Job Satisfaction among Women Officers and maybe compare the same with their male counterparts in the Army.

2. Literature Review

Women Leadership: Koenig et al. (2011) addressed the aspect of cultural perception of leadership, he stated that organisations largely believe that men make better leaders in comparison to women; hence, men have easier acceptance in leadership positions and consequently perform better. The above gets validated when we observe the small percentage of women performing roles as CEOs, executive officers and board members of Fortune 500 Companies (Hoyt, 2016). Martin & Barnard, (2013) observed that in traditionally male-dominated work environments women experience significant challenges related to the hierarchies in terms of gender and mind-sets that are etched in the societal and family frameworks. According to Haile et al. (2016) "gender stereotypes, sexual tensions, male chauvinism, and not capitalizing on women's talents" are the other primary barriers faced by women when it comes to career progression. The leadership challenges faced by women, include lack of sponsorship and mentorship, issues pertaining to work life equilibrium, cultural biases and stereotypes (Burns et al., 2017). From an Indian context, Kaushik M (2020), talks of reluctance to elect women leaders to high office, this when seen in the context of family pressure and work-life balance, makes women leaders a scarcity.

Military Leadership: In the United States military women have exhibited superior performance in their jobs yet they continue to face gender stereotyping. As compared to their male counterparts it appears that Women are often denied promotion to higher leadership (Loughlin & Arnold, 2007; Dichter & True, 2015; Asch et al., 2016; Williams & Mc Givern, 2017; Keller et al., 2018; Trobaugh, 2018;). Despite the notable improvements in supporting and encouraging gender equivalence, the military continues to remain a male centric setting where women struggle to prove their merit (Marencinova, 2018). Doan and Portillo (2017) draw attention towards another stereotype of women traditionally being the protected ones in the military domain and men being the protectors and leaders. This is one premise for those who do not advocate women serving in combat assignments basis a mind-set that "women are not as strong as men, and integration will interfere with organizational cohesion" (Collins-Dogrul & Ulrich, 2018).

Challenges in Army as a Career: The Army is regarded as a "greedy institution", which places additional demands not only on the soldier but also exerts additional pressure on the family members of the soldier. Segal mentions stress due to heightened probability of harm to the solder or death, frequent movement leading to prolonged spells of separation from family and pressure on the near and dear ones to display "approved" behaviours". In fact, Strader E & Smith M, (2022) in their study denoting both the family and the army as "greedy institutions", analyse the concept of work-family conflict and the reinforcement of the stereotype that talks of gender-based roles. In the Indian context, diminished levels of motivation, job satisfaction, career progression and inadequate stability in personal &family life emerged as major challenges (Parasher et al., 2022). One may contend that these pressures, in some form, exist in any organisation wherein, the demands of the employee family and the employer expectations, put pressure on the individual. However, they are predominantly more apparent in the case of the families of military personnel. (Schumm. W et al, 1994). The primary causes for stress experienced by the families were identified as redeployment/ transfer resulting in relocation, including foreign assignments, separation from the family on account of the inability of the family to accompany the military personnel to the new location, danger on account of the inherent nature of military work and the "institution of the Army"(Segal,1988). Moreover, "person–organization fit, job stress, job autonomy, internal security duties, pay, promotion, retirement concerns, resettlement concerns, family satisfaction, family involvement, work home conflict and recreational facilities" have been identified as factors that impact an officer in the Indian army (Jaiswal et al, 2015).

Relocation: Rahman Khadiza (2015) had noted that every individual achieves equilibrium with the environment and creates a comfort zone. However, a change in the environment due to relocation/ redeployment can lead to "attrition". Military personnel, on an average, undergo posting and transfer once every two to three years, which leads to a change in the station of residence (Doering, Hutzler, Francisco, & Sanchez, 1982; Vernez & Zellman, 1987; Devine, Bishop, & Perrine, 1987; Croan, Levine, & Blankinship, 1992). In the Indian context, Army Officers relocate after two years or so and this causes turbulence not just for the officer but also for the family (Parasher D, Singh R and Chitranshi J, 2022). Research has also concluded that both soldiers and their spouses connected relocation with reduction in happiness levels, both for the marriage and for the children (Ozkaptan et al. 1989). In fact, problems pertaining to relocation turned out to be the prime reasons for quitting (Vernez & Zellman, 1987) and relocation has been quoted as a prime disadvantage in terms of life in the Army (Styles et

al.,1990). Moreover, studies also assert that relocation has a contrary effect on the spouse's earnings and profession (Blanchard, 1982; Bowen, 1989; Chaskel, 1964; Jacobson, 1983; Styles et al., 1990; Scarville, 1991).

Separation: It has been observed that military family members experience a large range of emotional and social problems during periods of separation (Piotrkowski & Gormick,1987). Lagrone (1978) had earlier noted that in all probability separation from the father, when enforced, became one of the harshest forms of stress that a military spouse and the children were subjected to. A number of related studies have found that military personnel or their spouses have quoted family separation as perhaps the worst feature of military service; this resultantly has been one of the primary reasons for them to quit military service (Leider, 1970; Mohr et al., 1981). Wives have very often cited the challenge with children, as they had to perform the role of both, mother and father (Mc Evoy, 1982; Van Vranken et al., 1984). S. Beth Ru, Michael A. Keim (2014) have also alluded to the children's education being adversely impacted on account of the frequent and several change in school.

Army as an Institution: Army life poses challenges of a very unique type, very different from other professions. Goffman, (1961) mentions that Army considers soldiers and their families as a complete unit. It has a distinctive collection of requirements. While some of them may look like civilian situations, very limited civilian professions, if at all, "duplicate all of them" (Segal 1988). Kohen asserts that "what might be most regular about military duty could be its irregularity or unpredictability". He alludes to issues like unpredictability on when the workday would end, working well beyond normal hours, being called back to work for additional tasks, changes, often without reason among others.

Job Satisfaction: Maximizing employee performance with the aim of accomplishing organizational objectives is a crucial organizational goal (Butler & Rose 2011). Towards this, an organization needs employees who in addition to being highly motivated are content and stable. This improves performance and augments output and efficiency in the organization (Dugguh, S.I. and Dennis A., 2014). Motivation drives an individual to act in a manner that leads to satisfaction; Maslow (1943) has identified some of these multiple motivations. Hence, studies state that satisfaction follows when an individual acquires what he or she needs or wants or envisages himself or herself as deserving of the same (Thangaswamy & Thiyagaraj,2017). Moreover, the environmental besides the physiological and psychological conditions are related to Job Satisfaction (Hoppock, 1935). Blum (1968) conceptualized job satisfaction as

"an attitude which results from a balancing and summation of many specific likes and dislikes experienced in connection with the job". Daft (2003) called Job satisfaction a feeling of positivity experienced by an individual towards the occupation. Vroom (1964) observed that job satisfaction can be explained in terms of an individual having a positive orientation towards the work aspects in totality. Locke (1969) drew a relation between job satisfaction and an individual's emotional state, when he/ she carried out an appraisal of the experiences at the job. From the above research findings what emerges is that job satisfaction comprises of many factors which are dependant largely on the employees' perception of and expectations from the job. Another observation describes job satisfaction as the outcome of an emotional reaction to a job, which is the consequence of the individuals' comparison of how closely the end results matched with those that were desired, or expected or possibly even felt as deserved (Cranny, Smith & Stone, 1992).

Motivation: Motivation enables an individual to willingly strive that extra bit to accomplish an objective. Luthans (2010) related motivation to a process wherein behaviour is aimed or incentivised towards fulfilling a perceived deficiency, which may by physiological or psychological. There are some commonly accepted attributes regarding motivation, like: (i) motivation is objective oriented (Lawler, 1994), (ii) it delineates the accomplishment and the run up of goals (Denhardt et al., 2008) and (iii) it depends on the environment (Pettinger, 1996). The above suggests that the extent to which an individual adopts a course of action will be dictated by the belief that the results obtained would satisfy their expectations (Sansone and Harackiewicz, 2000; Ricky, Griffin & Moorhead, 2012). From a leader's perspective, to initiate an individual to behave in a desired manner, it is important that the sources of stimulus that would encourage the individual, in question, act willingly must be taken into consideration (Kian &Yusoff, 2015). As per Stephen P. Robbins, motivation is what causes an individual to wilfully apply higher levels of effort towards the accomplishment of organisational goals under the assumption or expectation that the effort would result in turn satisfy an individual need.

Relationship of Job Satisfaction & Motivation: Job satisfaction has been variously explained. One of them is related to motivation. It can be said that a motivated employee can achieve satisfaction through the accomplishment of an objective. Thangaswamy & Thiyagaraj (2017) while analysing theories on motivation and job satisfaction, observed and concluded that, even though the two concepts, were different, both, theoretically and in practice, it was actually very difficult to consider job satisfaction without considering

motivation. They premise this understanding based on the close relationship and the significant similarities observed between the procedures used for analysing work motivation and those related to the study of job satisfaction. Their observations relate to the features that include, financial remuneration, conditions at the work-place, intra personal and interpersonal relationship with colleagues, supervisors and managers, career progression avenues and other features of the job which may in some form influence the level of satisfaction an employee draws from working with the organization. Dugguh & Dennis (2014) concluded that Job Satisfaction was more likely to be the "measurement of job and work expectations and not just an overall holistic attitudinal manifestation". Griffin & Bateman (1986) and Hackman & Oldman (1979) advocate that job satisfaction can be the result of work-place experiences, leading to the positive and negative dispositions, it can also be the result of an attitudinal orientation, that may be positive or negative, depending on an individual's genetic inheritance, it could also be the outcome of how an individual perceives the reality at the work-place, based on work-place experiences, bonding with colleagues and by the nature and acceptability of feedback from the seniors. Further, the job features and the extent to which they harmonise with a person's natural tendencies and his/her expectations from the job, also define job satisfaction. Conceptually, job satisfaction is closely related to motivation, premised on the assumption that at the workplace a satisfied worker is more productive, effective and approaches the job better in comparison to one who isn't satisfied with his/her job (Hirszowicz, 1981). Aziri (2011) too observed the link between Job satisfaction and motivation. Most other studies too have established a "strong positive correlation and functional relation between job satisfaction and motivation" (Singh & Tiwari, 2011; Nadia & Shagufta, 2011).When subject to measurement it has been observed that, "the value of job satisfaction has a positive significant impact on the value of motivation" and the factors that contribute to enhanced levels of motivation were "the same that are responsible for determination of job satisfaction" (Chess, 1994). Subsequent studies over a period of time enabled identification of certain factors that contribute to both motivation and job satisfaction these include, "job security" (Davy, Kinicki, & Scheck, 1997; Ritter & Anker, 2000), "financial rewards" (Thomson, 2003), "power" (Hoole & Vermeulen, 2003) and "promotion" (Hoole & Vermeulen, 2003; Moynihan & Pandey, 2007).

Job Satisfaction Theories / Content Theories: Theories about job satisfaction are broadly categorised as "content theories and process theories". Critical theories relate to precise factors that encourage a person towards the job, but job satisfaction theories are more about the

subtleties and aspects of the motivation process. Differing opinions apart, it is largely accepted that these theories provide the basis for subject comprehension and the evolution of subsequent theories. An attempt to briefly evaluate these important theories is as follows:

"Abraham Maslow's Need Hierarchy Theory (1943)": Maslow has postulated that a human (employee) addresses the basic, essential needs before other higher order needs. The "five need sets" in chronological order are needs that are physiological besides those related to safety and security, love and belonging, status and prestige and self-actualisation.

"Frederick Herzberg: Two Factor Theory (1959)": Herzberg approached Job Satisfaction differently, analysing intrinsic factors and extrinsic factors. The former related to job satisfaction and the latter are associated with dissatisfaction. He opined that the antonym of job satisfaction should not be understood as job dissatisfaction but as no satisfaction. Similarly, the antonym of job dissatisfaction is again no satisfaction and not job satisfaction. (Herzberg, 2003.91). Accordingly, Herzberg discussed "Motivators & Hygiene Factors" to ascertain the workers' attitude towards work and to subsequently determine the performance level (Robbins, 2009). His research concluded that presence of certain factors may not contribute towards satisfaction. However, their absence results in dissatisfaction. These "Hygiene Factors", included constituents of working environment like work conditions, interpersonal issues and organizational policies (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), as also salary, role of supervisor, work settings, policies and guidelines, interpersonal relations, status and security (Dugguh & Dennis, 2014). Similarly, factors whose nonappearance do not lead to dissatisfaction, may have a motivational effect with their presence and hence are called "Motivators". Further research has established that "strong determinants of job satisfaction"- a feeling of achievement, receiving recognition, relevance and utility of work itself, a sense of responsibility and opportunity for career advancement are factors that stand out in importance. (Weir, 1976; Syptak, Marsland & Ulmer, 1999; Dugguh & Dennis, 2014).

"Clayton Alderfers ERG Theory (1969)": Alderfer retained Maslow's hierarchical structure, however, based on data and empirical research he compressed the levels from five to three, with a slight intersection in the intermediary layers and addressed them as Existence, Relatedness and Growth, in short ERG.

"Douglas Mc Greger: Theory X and Theory Y": Theory X goes by the assumptions that people dislike work and would rather avoid responsibility. Hence, the management needs to supervise

individuals and motivate them through incentives. Managers, who strongly think that employees work in this fashion adopt, what Hattngadi Vidya (2015) calls, the hard approach, one that involves very close monitoring, fear, and instant reprimand or penalty. Theory X is a "we versus they" approach, meaning thereby that the management and the employees are different (Fischer, 2009). On the other hand, in Theory Y, it is believed that an individual is responsible, self-disciplined and can exhibit creativity. In such a case, the manager should relate with the employee on an individual level, adopting an empowering approach as against a teaching-based relationship. Theory Y, managers enhance every team member's self-esteem, infuse confidence, create a sense of achievement, generate happiness and believe in respect for others (Hattngadi Vidya, 2015). Theory Y therefore tends towards a quasi-democratic environment in the workforce. Some feel that an individual and personal touch notwithstanding, this approach may lead to errors with regard to constancy and regularity (Carson, Charles, 2018). It can be said that Theory X and Theory Y are not conflicting or contradictory but are ways or beliefs in terms of getting work done and to accomplish maximum productivity, a blend of the two theories may prove to be suitable (Hattngadi Vidya, 2015).

“David McClelland’s Needs Theory”: David McClelland, in his book on “The Achieving Society” in 1961 identified three fundamental needs that motivated individuals to try and achieve success. Popularly known as the “Needs Theory”, these include “need for achievement, N-Ach, the need for power, N. Pow, and the need for affiliation, N. Aff”. The Need Theory does not indicate that the populace could be categorised “into one of the three types”. On the contrary, it emphasizes that “people are motivated by all of these needs in varying degrees and proportions. An individual's balance of these needs forms a kind of profile that can be useful in determining a motivational paradigm for them” (Brandon, 2015).

Theories of Job Satisfaction Theories/ Process Theories: Process theories attempt to outline the path that enables development of Job Satisfaction. Osemeke, M., & Adegboyega, S, (2017), stated that process theories are focused on logical thinking of an individual from their perspective. While needs of the majority may be largely alike, the degree of importance associated and the urgency of the needs may vary; this is what makes it highly subjective. One of the early and perhaps most important theories which explain job satisfaction is Vroom’s Theory of Expectancy (Vroom, 196), that draws a relation between effort and outcome. Porter & Lawler (1968) alluded to incentives or rewards, both extrinsic and intrinsic, which

cumulatively contributed to Job Satisfaction, they proposed a linkage between reward and needs. Their view was that an individual's level of motivation relied on the value they placed on the resultant reward, this in turn dictated the quantum of effort they would put in to achieve the reward. Hence, motivation relied on the ability to align the reward with needs. Lawler's philosophy (Lawler E.E, 1973) was that in order to have effective organizations it was important to understand how to motivate and encourage effective individual performance. He explains the linkage between job satisfaction and motivation, he showed the importance on how the work design and resulting reward for individuals resulted in creating high performing organizations by improving managerial practices. The fundamental issue emphasised is that no matter what approach is adopted; its success depends on its ability to motivate employees to perform.

Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction: Job Satisfaction is affected by multiple factors emanating externally from the environment, internally from within the individual and then from psychological influences. Dwelling on the external environmental factors Krayer & Westbrook (1986), Weiss & Cropanzano (1996) identified "communication, employee recognition" among others. Regarding the intrinsic individual specific factors Cote & Morgan (2002) listed out "emotions, genetics and personality". The psychological influences originated from life experiences, family, and the community as per Wright & Cropanzano, (2000). According to a report from the Harvard Professional Group (2005), establishments that endeavour to create a work atmosphere that augments job satisfaction among employees need to focus on issues that include: Flexible work arrangements, opportunities for training and career development, work assignments that are diverse and challenging, opportunities that enable individuals exploit their talents and exhibit creativity, enable employees shoulder responsibility, lead and direct tasks. A work setting that ensures stability and security, provides the employees an environment wherein they feel supported and part of a team, have a supervisor who is approachable and provides timely feedback, provide additional incentives in the form of benefits that ensure work-life balance and ensure adequate financial remuneration and prospects for promotion.

3. **Research Gap & Description of Broad Scope**

Recent developments have significantly changed the way the organisation needs to look at service considerations impacting the professional career of Women Officers. Women officers are now being considered for permanent commission, being promoted to selection grade rank of Colonel today and maybe senior rank tomorrow. This could lead to a future possibility of women officers becoming integrated with combat arms. Women officers are also being given command assignments. Hence, it becomes important, from an organisation perspective, to critically analyse aspects of Job satisfaction and Motivation, as they impact women officers.

There is very limited open-domain research work, in the Indian context, which outlines the impact of challenges confronted by women officers, in the Army, in their quest for elevation to the senior leadership assignments. The developments regarding permanent commission and elevation to the rank of Colonel being very recent, there is practically no research work on the subject of Job Satisfaction and Motivation. The Indian Army is a rule bound organisation deployed in challenging inhospitable terrain conditions, with frequent re-location, and the promotion pyramid remains steep. These are factors, akin to the ones the male officers also experience. Similarly, there are common factors which impact Job Satisfaction and Motivation, of all ranks, irrespective of gender. The gender based comparative analysis is definitely a major research gap. It may also be worthwhile to analyse, differences if any, on how the service conditions are perceived by women officers in the medical branch in comparison to those in other non-medical wings of the Army. Al Serhan et al, (2023), analysed how a supportive work environment has an impact on women's aspirations to become leaders, in the Jordanian Armed Forces. Such studies in the Indian context are also required.

Women, have the right to stake claim to equitable opportunities. However, there may be a difference in the way the two genders, perceive the impact of service conditions on their potential to assume senior leadership assignments. There is also the need to analyse the requirement of the "right person for the right job", hence, are there some senior leadership assignments, command or staff, which women are attitudinally better suited to assume? Is it a Job Requirement vs. Capability mismatch or are Stereotypes and Biases the reason. Having said that the present study would predominantly focus on the factors affecting job satisfaction of women officers and also assess the effect of gender on the same.

4. Aim & Objectives of Research

The aim of the study to identify the women officer's take on job satisfaction & associated factors notwithstanding, the present research additionally intends to unravel the male officer's perspective too, so as to, bring out the similarities and disparities, if any, in the perception regarding job satisfaction.

Furthermore, measuring Job Satisfaction levels among women officers and providing policy frameworks supportive of gender inclusivity have become important from a Human Resource perspective. Viewing the same according to the" Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5", that is premised on gender equality (Leal Filho et al., 2020), the objectives of the research study, aligned with SDG 5 seen in the context of the Indian Army, are as under:-

a. To identify factors affecting job satisfaction among women officers
b. To measure job satisfaction levels among women officers
c. To assess the effect of gender on job satisfaction in the Indian Army

5. Research Methodology

The research design of the present study would be descriptive and indicative of the perception of women officers of the Indian Army regarding satisfaction with their job and gender disparity. Both secondary sources like research papers, books, articles & reviews by various scholars besides internal studies and research findings of the Army and primary sources would be used.

Data Collection: The primary data would be collected from the serving officers, both Women and Men, across varying rank profiles using the survey method. Hence the purposive stratified sampling method would be used for the survey to enable data evaluation from different subgroups or strata. Also, among women officers, equal focus will be on officers from the Medical Branch. The sample size would be around 150 – 200Women Officers and a similar number of male counterparts.

Research Instrument: In measuring Job Satisfaction, Literature Review has established a convergence of certain factors, in the Indian context. Parasher et al (2022) while analysing "Factors Leading to Premature Retirement Among Officers Serving in the Indian Army" identified "Incorrect Assignments, Lack of Motivation, Inadequate Professional Development, Inadequate Stability in Personal & Family Life etc" as major challenges. Kaushik M (2020),

has alluded to effect of "family pressure and work-life balance". Similar issues have also been mentioned in western studies in terms of job satisfaction. Therefore, considering the peculiarities of the Army as a Career and Army as a Way of Life, related specifically to women in the Armed Forces, the US Army Survey, is proposed to be used. Approved by the US Army Research Institute for Behavioural Social Sciences, the standardized survey questionnaire used by the US Army, Defence Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, (DACOWITS), analyses Job Satisfaction. Besides this and to further strengthen the Indian context for measuring Job Satisfaction among Women Officers in the Indian Army, an Indian study by Jaiswal et al, (2015) which has proposed and developed a scale including "job-related organizational and personal factors" mentioned in the literature review that impacted an officer in the Indian military would be incorporated.

After data collection, empirical analysis of the data would be conducted using various tools selected according to the suitability of the same. IBM SPSS 21.0 would be used to get the results.

6. Utility of Research

The research will provide an insight into the prevailing levels of Job Satisfaction and also indicate gender inequality, if it exists. Accordingly, future policy formulation can be more informed. The Theory of Organizational Equilibrium, conceived by March & Simon (1958), hypothesised that an employee continues to remain in an organization till such time the advantages in terms of rewards from the organization matched the effort and time devoted to the job. When the equilibrium between the two was disturbed, and the employee did not perceive the rewards being commensurate, the employee explored alternative job options. In the Indian Army, it becomes pertinent to see "How best can issues related to Job Satisfaction be addressed for Women Officers".

Women Officers expect equal opportunities for growth and seek similar treatment as their male counterparts. Most join the Army as it offers an elevated social status, an attractive career option and a work environment vastly different from the corporate/ civil environment. To keep them motivated to perform, it is pertinent to address the question on "How best can the growth aspirations of the Women Officers be addressed by the IA", without compromising on its mandated roles.

There are understandable physiological/ biological differences, socio-cultural factors etc that are inhibiting factors, for combat deployment. However, Women Officers have their own unique talents and abilities. As an organisation it is important to know "How best are the Women Officers to be employed to complement those of their male colleagues to get the best results, for the organisation?"

The Human Capital Theory suggests, that when an individual resigns the organisation is deprived of the skills and abilities that are essential for the collective improved performance of the workforce. This negatively impacts effectiveness of an organization (La Rocco, Pugh, & Gunderson, 1977) and its success (Mehay, 1990).Hence, "What organisational policies need to be evolved to optimise the capabilities of the Women Officers by effectively addressing the work environment-related challenges?"

To conclude, this study with its focus on Women Officers in the Indian Army would shed light on the factors affecting their job satisfaction and the impact of gender (if any) on the same. The responses from the viewpoint of the women who have lived the experience would provide a deeper understanding and add value to the existing research. Moreover, the responses of their male counterparts on job satisfaction would additionally provide a comparative narrative leading to possible strategies, policies, and practical guidance towards both employee and organizational advantage in a women friendly space.

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